

Walter, Judith

From: Joan Lodsins <joanlodsins@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 08, 2015 8:34 PM
To: GAETestimony
Cc: Sen. Kane, Rob; zRepresentative Arthur ONeill
Subject: HB #6904 Public Testimony

Esteemed members of the Connecticut Senate,

I wish to offer written testimony in objection to HB #6904, a bill which would change how Registrars of Voters' are put in office and how their duties and responsibilities would change as would those of the Town Clerk.

Our current system of having one Registrar for each major political party is working in the vast majority of our cities and towns. It is an equitable system as far as representation of each party. In our town each Registrar receives a stipend from the town but they do not receive other benefits. Many Registrars put in hours on their own time to be sure the job is done completely and correctly. If the bill, as written, is passed the cost to each town would go up. This starts to sound like another unfunded mandate for the State of CT to the towns in our state.

I do not see any way this suggested system would be more non partisan as represented by Secretary of the State Merrill. The person(s) running the town would certainly appoint a member of their own party. How is that non partisan? Wouldn't it be better to continue the check and balance now in place?

In her press conference Secretary of the State Merrill stated that she saw a problem in the election cycle of 2012 so she increased the oversight by her office on the Registrars. Problems in 2014 were more prevalent according to SOTS Merrill. That would seem to indicate that the extra oversight did not work. Perhaps the office of the SOTS should offer more training to the Registrars and even make site visits to see how the Registrars are doing and help them rather than watch over their shoulders.

Voting is both a right and a privilege. Please do not continue to erode the system so the act of voting becomes a meaningless exercise. More emphasis should be put on the "privilege" of voting rather than the right to vote. A person who exercises this privilege is ore apt to be a knowledgeable, concerned citizen who cares about the rights of all.

Thank you for all you do for the State of Connecticut.

Sincerely,
Joan M. Lodsins
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